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Message Text

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11
ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-25 MC-02 EB-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 NEA-14 NIC-01 OMB-01

CIEP-03 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /152 W
---------- 124955
R 191038Z AUG 74
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2184
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1282

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SO, ET, MPOL

SUBJ: VISIT OF WEST GERMAN MIL ATTACHE FROM ADDIS

1. FRG MIL ATTACHE LT COL HORST-ACHIM PINNOW, ASSIGNED ADDIS BUT ALSO ACCREDITED TO SOMALIA, VISITED MOGADISCIO AUGUST 13-18 IN EFFORT TO UP-DATE HIS INFORMATION OF SOMAI MIL CAPABILITY. HE CALLED AT EMBASSY AUG 17 OF HIS OWN VOLITION TO OFFER HIS NUMBERS TO US, AS WELL AS HIS CONCLUSIONS AS TO GSDR INTENT OVER SHORT AND LONG TERM. HE DIDN'T ASK FOR OUR OWN ESTIMATES OF GSDR MIL CAPABILITY. WE AGREED THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY GSDR WOULD TAKE ANY MILITARY INITIATIVE IN NEAR FUTURE BUT THAT LONG-TERM PICTURE WAS MORE CLOUDY.

2. PINNOW TALKED WITH BOTH EGYPTIAN AND ITALIAN MIL ATTACHES HERE, AS WELL AS OTHER CONTACTS. HE ALSO CITED A FEW FRENCH ESTIMATES WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN COLLECTED LOCALLY. THERE IS IN ANY CASE SOME DISPARITY BETWEEN THE NUMBERS OFFERED BY HIS VARIOUS SOURCES AND IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW HIS FINAL ESTIMATES WILL BE COLLATED FROM THIS RAW MATERIAL.

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3. ON T-54S, FOR EXAMPLE, PINNOW HAS THREE SETS OF FIGURES.

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EGYPTIAN MIL ATTACHE ESTIMATES THAT SOMALI ARMY NOW HAS THREE BATTALIONS OF T-54S, FOR TOTAL OF SIXTY-THREE. FRENCH ESTIMATES ARE LOWER--THIRTY-SIX IN ALL--WHILE ITALIANS SAY EGRTY. (PINNOW HIMSELF HAS SEEN NEITHER T-54S NOR ANY PHOTOS THEREOF.) THE FRENCH THINK THE GSDR MAY HAVE SAM-3S, BOTH AT HARGEISA AND MOGADISCIO, WHILE THE ITALIANS AREN'T SURE, ETC. ON MIG-21S, PINNOW THINKS THE SOMALI AIR FORCE MAY HAVE SIX MIG-21S OPERATIONAL, AND PERHAPS SIX MORE IN CRATES. ANY NOTION THAT SOMALIA HAS MIG-23S, IN HIS WORDS, IS NONSENSE. WE AGREED.

4. ON MILITARY BALANCE OF FORCES BETWEEN IEG AND GSDR, PINNOW BELIEVES GSDR HAS 4-1 ADVANTAGE IN TANKS, ANTI-AIRCRAFT AND APCS, BUT IT WASN'T CLEAR WHOSE FIGURES HE WAS USING--THE EGYPTIAN, FRENCH, ITALIAN OR HIS OWN.

5. HE ALSO CLAIMED THAT GSDR NOW HAS A MONTH'S POL RESERVE AND THAT THIS QUANTITY IS MUCH GREATER THAN PREVIOUS ESTIMATES.

6. HE DID REQUEST OUR COMMENTS ON TWO POINTS: (A) THE CHANCES OF SOMALIA, WITH ARAB SUPPORT, WINNING ITS TERRITORIAL BATTLES WITHIN THE OAU; AND (B) WHAT ALTERNATIVE CONCLUSION WE COULD OFFER AS TO SOMALIA'S LONG-TERM INTENT--GIVEN ITS OBSESSIVE DESIRE TO OBTAIN MORE MODERN MIL EQUIPMENT--EXCEPT AS EVIDENCE OF ITS AGGRESSIVE DESIGNS UPON ITS BENIGN NEIGHBORS.

7. WE SAID IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR SOMALIA TO WIN ITS OBJECTIVES WITHIN THE OAU, EVEN WITH ARAB SUPPORT.

8. ON SOMALIA'S LONG-RANGE OBJECTIVES, WE NOTED THAT THE QUESTION HAD BEEN ASKED US SO OFTEN THAT, FOR VARIETY'S SAKE, WE FOUND IT USEFUL TO OCCASIONALLY TURN THE QUESTION AROUND. WAS IT A QUESTION OF SOMALIA'S ENORMOUS APPETITE FOR ARMS OR THE USSR'S READY DISPOSITION TO SELL ARMS. THE SELLING OF ARMS HAD FOR THE SOVET UNION AN ADVANTAGE OVER ALL OTHER FORMS OF ASSISTANCE. TO BEGIN WITH, YEARS AGO THE SOMALIS HAD ASKED FOR ARMS AND THE USSR HAD RESPONDED, AS IT WAS CONTINUING TO RESPOND. IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT NOT TO. MOREOVER, ARMS SALES WERE A MUCH MORE RELIABLE WAY OF PERPETUATING THE SOVIET PRESENCE THAN ANY OTHER FORM OF ASSITANCE. MILITARY ASSISTANCE--BECAUSE OF SPARE PARTS, LOGISTICAL SUPPORT, ETC.--WAS NOT INTER-
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CHANGEABLE AMONG DONORS THE WAY CAPITAL ASSISTANCE OR ECONOMIC CREDITS WERE. DONOR NATIONS COULD NOT BE INTERCHANGED WITHOUT FORCING THE RECIPIENT COUNTRY TO BEGIN FROM SCRATCH IN ASSEMBLING A NEW DEFENSE SYSTEM. ARMS PURCHASES HAVE IN ADDITION A CERTAIN MOMENTUM OF THEIR OWN. SINCE THE SOVIET UNION HAD ONCE GIVEN SOMALIA MIG-17S ETC., WAS ANYONE REALLY GENUINELY SURPRISED--GIVEN THE SOVIET INTEREST IN SOMALIA--THAT IT WAS NOW SELLING THEM MIG-21S? THE SOVIET UNION WAS NOW INTERESTED MORE THAN

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EVER IN MAINTAINING ITS PRESENCE IN SOMALIA, WHICH WAS EAGER
IN TURN TO KEEP ITS ARMAMENTS UP-TO-DATE. THE LATEST EQUIPMENT
DELIVERIES SHOULD BE VIEWED WITH THE SOVIET PERSPECTIVE IN MIND
AS WELL, AND NOT AS CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE OF SOMALIE'S LONG-RANGE
MILITARY INTENTIONS IN THE HORN.

9. PINNOW AGREED, NOT SO MUCH BECAUSE HE FULLY ACCEPTED THE

VALIDITY OF A LARGELY RHETORICAL AND INCOMPLETE ARGUMENT, BUT
BECAUSE IT PROVIDED YET ANOTHER SKEIN FOR THE REPORT HE'SLL
WEAVE WHEN HE RETURNS TO ADDIS.
HAMRICK

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